

The Psychological Society of Ireland welcomes the Joint Committee on Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Report on Assessments of Need for Children

The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) has welcomed the Joint Committee on Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth [Report on Assessments of Need for Children](#).

In particular, the PSI wishes to endorse many of the recommendations of the Joint Committee who have validated the concerns expressed by the PSI and other HSCP colleagues.

The PSI agrees, with recommendation of the Joint Committee that; *“There needs to be an acknowledgment of the levels of resourcing required at all levels politically and within the HSE, in order to address the crisis in the disability sector.”* This was best highlighted in the report by the reflection that *“there seems to be a tendency to underfund services for the most vulnerable or expect therapists to perform miracles of the loaves and fishes variety, to deliver more amidst growing demand and limited resources”*

The Society continually argued against the introduction of the PTA under the SOP introduced in 2020. Approximately 10,000 of these PTAs took place, most of which will now have to be re-done. This has come at a cost to services and more significantly has caused further barriers and delays for children. This adds further to the challenges. As stated in the report *“failures within disability services over the last number of years have caused immeasurable harm to children, parents and therapists”*.

The Joint Committee also recommended that:

“The panel-based system of recruitment should be replaced with a new system, which should be developed by working in conjunction with health and social care professionals. This should not impact on or pause hiring in the meantime.”

The PSI has consistently [highlighted](#) for many years how the national panel-based system of recruitment is a direct impediment to getting the right people in the right place at the same time

and continues to be available to work with the HSE and other stakeholders to develop a fit for purpose model of recruitment.

The PSI is also supportive of efforts to retain existing staff, including the possibility of promoting those in staff grade positions to senior positions when eligible.

The PSI welcomes the Joint Committee's recognition and recommendation that:

“Student therapists must receive remuneration for their internship and placement
work.”

All trainee psychologists working on placement in child disability locations deserve to be remunerated for the services they deliver and equity of conditions for trainee counselling & educational psychologists remain an imperative for the PSI.

The PSI wishes to thank the Joint Committee for their work in gathering the evidence which underpins the recommendations in this report and looks forward to working with government, the HSE & other relevant stakeholders to bring all of the Joint Committee's recommendations to fruition in a timely manner.

President of the Psychological Society of Ireland Dr Anne Kehoe states: “We have a duty as a society to ensure that the rights of all children are vindicated, and especially children with disabilities. Children & their families have been let down by the perfect storm of a legacy of under-resourcing, poor systems being implemented without meaningful consultation with representative bodies, and families having to vindicate their rights in the courts. New proposed clinical guidelines should not be implemented without meaningful consultation, which is yet to occur, we cannot repeat the mistakes of the past, these children deserve better.”

Ends.

For further information, or to arrange an interview please contact:

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Points to note:

- The *Joint Committee on Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Report on Assessments of Need for Children* can be viewed [here](#).
- The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI), with almost 4,000 members, is the learned and professional body for the profession in the Republic of Ireland, with the primary object of advancing psychology as an applied science in Ireland and elsewhere.

- Connect with the PSI through [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), and [LinkedIn](#).